

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**GOVERNOR WARNER DEDICATES A NEWLY RENOVATED BUILDING IN VIRGINIA'S  
CAPITOL SQUARE IN HONOR OF CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATE OLIVER W. HILL**

**~ Former Finance Building is the First Building in Virginia's Capitol Square to be  
Named for an African American ~**

**RICHMOND** – Governor Mark R. Warner today officially dedicated a newly renovated building in Virginia's Capitol Square in honor of Oliver W. Hill one of the leading advocates of civil rights who played a role in the historic landmark case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. Formerly known as the Finance Building, this newly renovated building is the first and only building in Virginia's Capitol Square to be named for a prominent African American.

“Oliver W. Hill is a man who throughout his life has been steadfast in his resolve for equal rights under the law,” said Governor Warner. “The significance of his contributions to desegregation are being recognized today as Virginians honor Mr. Hill for his unwavering stance for civil liberties and for improving the lives of all Americans.”

Oliver W. Hill and his family and friends joined Governor Warner, former governors, members of the NAACP, and more than 300 guests on the front lawn of the Executive Mansion to officially unveil the 100 pound bronze plaque that will be placed on the east side of the building's exterior. As the first building constructed specifically for state offices and the first building in Capitol Square named for a prominent African American, it is also the first state owned building to be renovated through a public-private partnership.

Implemented through the Public-Private Educational Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002 (PPEA), the Oliver W. Hill building is the first state-owned building renovated and restored through an approach that restructures the procurement process by establishing a partnership with the private sector. The conventional approach to a capitol improvement project often can take on average of 24-to-30 months due to the sequencing of events such as hiring an architect, designing the building, bidding for a contractor and then constructing the project. Through the PPEA, because many tasks occurred simultaneously, the project time for this building was reduced and took about 18 months.

Born in 1907, Hill became known as a staunch defender for civil rights spending his legal career broadening the equalization standard established in 1896 in the case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, which was the basis for segregation. Taking on numerous civil rights cases, Hill was successful in achieving equal pay for black and white teachers and attaining equal transportation for school children. He played a pivotal role in desegregation in America with his lawsuit *Davis vs. County School Board of Prince Edward County*. This case became one of five cases to be decided under the historic 1954 landmark decision of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. Retiring from his legal practice in 1998, Hill has been the recipient of many awards and honors. He has received the American Bar Association Medal and in 1999 President Clinton awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Built in 1895, this neoclassical building with iconic columns is the third most historic structure in Capitol Square following the Executive Mansion and the Capitol. It was the first building to be constructed specifically for state offices and has been described as a symbol of Virginia emerging from the Reconstruction era. During its history the building housed the Virginia State Library, Supreme Court of Appeals, the State Treasurer's Office, and the Museum of Natural History. It will now serve as offices for the Lieutenant Governor, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Compensation Board.

The \$26.3 million renovation included the replacement of all the building's electrical and mechanical systems; installation of new elevators, sprinkler systems, fire alarms, and bathrooms; the re-pointing and replacement of the brick facade; the repairing of cornices; and the addition of entrances and other accessibility features for the disabled. Also, some original elements of the building were able to be preserved, such as the grand marble and wrought iron staircase, handmade mosaic tiles, wooden windows, bronze front doors, and a steel vault door to what used to be a safe for the Treasurer's office. The construction of a two-level addition fronting Governor Street was also part of the project. Using more than 220 precast concrete pieces, precast spandrels, column covers, wall panels, and window units were made in both granite and buff colors to match the original structure.

This is the second building renovation in a series of four building improvement projects in Capitol Square which include the newly renovated Patrick Henry building, the renovation of the capitol, and the soon to be renovated Washington building. For this renovation project the Trammell Crow Company served as Developer; DPR Construction, Inc. as the General Contractor; Ballou Justice Upton Architects as the Project Architect; Baskervill as the interior and space planning architect; and The Shockey Precast Group, Inc manufactured the precast concrete for use on the exterior of the addition.

For more information about the renovation project or other improvements in Capitol Square, log on to [www.dgs.virginia.gov](http://www.dgs.virginia.gov) and click on Major Construction Projects.

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